

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 /069 W
-----072053Z 103156 /75

R 072011Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0125
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 05762

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, BE
SUBJECT: POLICY STATEMENT OF NEW GOVERNMENT BEFORE
BELGIAN PARLIAMENT

REF: A. BRUSSELS 5625, B. BRUSSELS 5495

SUMMARY

IN A POLICY STATEMENT BEFORE THE BELGIAN LOWER HOUSE
ON JUNE 7 PRIME MINISTER LEO TINDEMANS RECAPPED
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THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COALITION PROGRAM OF GOVERNMENT,
CALLING FOR WIDE SUPPORT FOR A FAIR-MINDED APPLICATION OF
THE COMMUNITY PACT WHICH HE CALLED BELGIUM'S CHARTER
OF RECONCILIATION. CONFIDENCE OF THE HOUSE IS
IN THE SECOND TINDEMAN GOVERNMENT IS VIRTUALLY ASSURED.
SOCIALIST DEPUTY, EX-PRIME MINISTER EDMOND LEBURTON,
WAS ELECTED SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

END SUMMARY

1. PRIME MINISTER LEO TINDEMANS PRESENTED THE FORMAL DECLARATION OF HIS NEWLY SWORN GOVERNMENT (REFTEL A) TO THE BELGIAN PARLIAMENT JUNE 7. AN ABBREVIATED SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM OF GOVERNMENT AGREED UPON BY THE COALITION PARTIES (REFTEL B), THE DECLARATION MADE THE FOLLOWING MAJOR POINTS:

2. COMMUNITY PROBLEM: THE REPRESENTATIVES OF BELGIUM'S TWO COMMUNITIES AND THREE REGIONS HAVE SHOWN THE COURAGE AND WILL TO DEVELOP A PACT WHICH, IF APPLIED IN A GENEROUS AND OPEN-MINDED MANNER, CAN BECOME BELGIUM'S CHARTER OF RECONCILIATION.

3. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY: BELGIUM WILL NOT STAND PASSIVE IN A WORLD CRISIS WHICH THREATENS ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEM. ENERGY AND RAW MATERIAL POLICIES ARE OF FOREMOST IMPORTANCE. THE WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER IS CHANGING. BELGIUM MUST REORIENT ITS ECONOMY TOWARD TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED, HIGH-VALUE-ADDED INDUSTRY. EXPORT INDUSTRY MUST BE ENCOURAGED, SMALL AND MIDDLE-SIZED BUSINESSES ASSISTED. ALL MEANS WILL BE USED TO COMBAT INFLATION. BUDGET REFORM IS A MAJOR CONCERN. BUT, GIVEN THE NEED FOR ECONOMIC STIMULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO A BALANCED BUDGET. A THREE-YEAR PLAN FOR BUDGET REFORM WILL, HOWEVER, BE DEVELOPED. ADDITIONAL REVENUE WILL BE FOUND BY CRACKING DOWN ON INCOME TAX

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FRAUD. AN EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO EFFECT A FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF THE TAX BURDEN. UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE TOP PRIORITY PROBLEM. TO COMBAT IT, GOVERNMENT WILL LOOK BOTH TO PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISE. IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE FIELD, THE EMPHASIS WILL BE ON AIDING THE MOST DISADVANTAGED. PENSIONS WILL BE INCREASED. MINIMUM FAMILY INCOMES WILL BE REVISED UPWARD. SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS WILL BE TIED, NOT ONLY TO THE COST OF LIVING, BUT ALSO TO THE RISING LEVEL OF GENERAL WAGES. BUT, IN CONSULTATION WITH MANAGEMENT AND LABOR, THE WHOLE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM WILL HAVE TO BE REVISED.

4. INTERNATIONAL AND DEFENSE POLICY: BELGIUM WILL WORK FOR GREATER EUROPEAN UNITY. BELGIUM WILL REMAIN A MEMBER OF NATO, ASPIRING TO AN OPTIMUM CONTRIBUTION IN TROOPS AND RESOURCES IN ORDER TO ATTAIN MAXIMUM EFFECT WITH THE MINIMUM BURDEN ON THE NATION. BELGIUM WILL PURSUE ITS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE BALANCED, SIMULTANEOUS AND CONTROLLED DISARMAMENT.

5. DECLARING THAT THE TASKS FACING HIS GOVERNMENT ARE
FORMIDABLE, TINDEMANS APPEALED FOR THE BROADEST POSSIBLE
SUPPORT. DEBATE ON THE DECLARATION, WHICH BEGAN ON A
NOISY NOTE BY OPPOSITION LIBERALS, WILL CONTINUE JUNE 8,
WITH VOTING SCHEDULED FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY. WITH 172
OF THE 212 SEATS IN THE LOWER HOUSE CONTROLLED BY THE
COALITION PARTIES, THE CONFIDENCE OF THE CHAMBER IS NOT
IN DOUBT. SOCIALIST DEPUTY (AND EX-PRIME MINISTER)
EDMOND LEBURTON WAS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED PRESIDING

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OFFICER OF THE LOWER HOUSE, SUCCEEDING ANDRE DEQUAE,
RETIRED. OLSEN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition History: n/a
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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